

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 7064

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, CI
SUBJECT: GOC ARRESTS SEVEN SUSPECTED EXTREMISTS

1. THE GOC'S DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION ON AUGUST 25 ANNOUNCED THE ARREST OF 7 PERSONS-INCLUDING ONE SAID TO BE AN ACTIVIST OF THE OUTLAWED MIR--PARTICIPATING IN A "CLANDESTINE POLITICAL MEETING." IT STATED THAT THE ARREST FOLLOWED A RAID BY CARABINERO (UNIFORMED POLICE) FORCES ON A KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 24.

2. THE GOC STATEMENT CREDITED NEIGHBORS WITH INFORMING THE CARABINEROS, WHO MOVED SWIFTLY IN ON THE GROUP OF 5 MEN AND 2 WOMEN AND STATED THAT DOCUMENTS, "SUBVERSIVE" PAMPHLETS, AND FALSE IDENTITY CARNETS WERE SEIZED DURING THE RAID.

3. THE ALLEGED MIRISTA IS IDENTIFIED AS PATRICIO REYES SUTHERLAND, WHO THE GOC CLAIMS ACTED AS CHIEF OF COMMUNICATIONS AND SECURITY WITHIN THE MIR'S CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND WHO WAS REPORTEDLY RELEASED FROM TRES ALAMOS ON NOVEMBER 17, 1976. OUR INTERNAL NAME TRACE REVEALED REYES' RELEASE FROM TRES ALAMOS, BUT SHOWED NO TIES WITH THE MIR. CHECKS ON THE OTHERS WERE NEGATIVE.

4. A CHURCH ORGAN, OPERATING WITHIN THE SANTIAGO ARCH-
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BISHOPRIC AND CLAIMING TO HAVE SUPERVISORY CONTROL OF THE KINDERGARTEN SCHOOL, ISSUED A STATEMENT ON AUGUST 25 PROTESTING THE ARREST ACTION AND ACCUSING "SENSATIONALIST MEDIA" (A REFERENCE TO NEWSPAPER "LA SEGUNDA") OF TRYING AND CONVICTING THE 7, BEFORE THEY HAD A CHANCE OF PLEADING THEIR CASE IN COURT. MEANWHILE THE GROUP REMAINS IN-COMMUNICADO AND IN THE HANDS OF MILITARY PROSECUTORS.

5. COMMENT: THE ARREST ACTION IS UNSETTLING, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE GOC'S RECENT GOOD BEHAVIOR. THERE HAD BEEN NO REPORTS OF ARRESTS OR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN NEARLY 3 MONTHS AND WE NOTED DURING THE LOWENSTEIN-TODMAN-CODEL VISITS A SINCERE EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE GOC TO REFRAIN FROM ACTIVITIES WHICH WOULD PROVOKE CRITICISM FROM ABROAD. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN RUMORS THAT THE GOC WOULD COMMENCE A ROUND-UP OF POTENTIAL POLITICAL TROUBLE-MAKERS PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 11, IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE POSSIBILITY OF DEMONSTRATIONS OR ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT ON ITS 4TH ANNIVERSARY. IF SO, THIS COULD BE THE BEGINNING.

6. IT MAY BE WORTH NOTING THAT THESE ARRESTS WERE MADE BY THE CARABINEROS, NOT BY CNI (THE DINA SUCCESSOR). WHATEVER THE FACTS AND MOTIVES OF THESE PARTICULAR ARRESTS, THE GOC IS ATTEMPTING TO SHOW THAT BUSINESS IS NOT EXACTLY AS USUAL.
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